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May 6, 1982

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FROM: Tripoli

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 138, November 10, noon

SENT DEPARTMENT 138, REPEATED INFORMATION BENGHAZI UNNUMBERED.

FOR DEPARTMENT AND AGRICULTURE.

Anderson given available data requested DEPTEL 90, November 3. While production estimates believed lower than actual harvest, sowing lack data collecting system and farmers reticence furnish information fearing taxes, country-wide grain production last three years low and reserves held by individuals and government considered near exhaustion.

Cyrenaica hopes build up reserves barley with this year's surplus in Western part of province. Eastern part severely affected by drought and in response to urgent plea from governor, development agency has placed order for 4,000 tons in Syria which reported available at lower cost than that produced in province. This action taken as result lack coordination by Libyan Government officials pending receipt response from Department to official request 6,200 tons (LEGTEL 120, October 14).

Libyan Federal and Tripolitanian Government officials informally interested receive balance grain (2,200 tons) in wheat on famine relief basis suggested DEPTEL 91, November 6. Distribution would be through established procedure of allocations to district commissioners and from these to Cabila chiefs for issue on basis three kilos per day for family of six. Government requires head recipient family perform work of nature which will help reduce possibility recurrence famine in area.

Tripolitanian officials also informally interested MSA barley to make up country-wide deficit this year's crop. Say government cannot pay for it out of relief funds because these exhausted but would sell grain commercially and deposit net proceeds into special fund for joint use as grain sold. Can we accept this in principle?

Legation presumes that since prospective purchase 17,000 tons wheat considered normal requirement and generally obtained friendly countries it cannot qualify under MSA.

WILLARD

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